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MUSICAL MYTHS.

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THE legend of Orpheus has been variously interpreted by the exponents of mythology, but however various their exposition, all seem to concur that the existence of a minstrel so accomplished as to make trees to follow him, and stones to move at the sound of his voice, is a fact which needs explaining by some hypothesis or another. A wider view of musical mythology than theorists are apt to take will, however, reveal the fact that not only have there been one Orpheus, but many Orpheuses in the world's history; that the whole chapter of man's imagination, which is mythology, teems with legends of music; and that so far from a scientific explanation being applicable to each, their very multiplicity would be a complete and effectual bar to such an attempt.

Of all the Orpheuses of primitive and savage legend—for the uncivilised races indulge in these fancies no less than their more educated brethren—Amalivaca, the divine minstrel of the Indians of Guiana, is one of the most curious. The whole earth was covered with water, and the rocks were prostrated by the flood; the beauty of the earth had completely disappeared under the chaotic onslaught of the destroying elements; and mankind, or what there was left of them, were in despair at the ruins of their once beautiful habitation, the globe. It was at this time that Amalivaca, the best drummer the world had ever seen, took his drum, made of the finest snake-skin, and beat upon it in time and measure so symmetrical, that the waters gradually sank delighted to the sea, and the rocks arose to listen. In this way, while he continued playing, the materials of the universe gradually sorted themselves until they attained the form they wear at present. Amphion building the walls of Thebes would perhaps be the classical analogy to this exploit of Amalivaca. Amalivaca also invented the first musical instrument which human ear ever heard—the rattle. Divine help was neces-

sary to him towards performing this triumph of discovery, pondering over which the musician wandered restlessly and uneasily about the banks of the Orinoco, not knowing what to do or how to satisfy his desire for music. In those days, says the legend, there was no musical sound in the world beyond what came from the untaught and sweet cadences of the voice of women. Music, with its regular beats and its regular refrains, had no existence; but Amalivaca had conceived the art in his mind. As he was walking down the reedy side of the Orinoco, a female form suddenly appeared from the water, and plucking off a gourd from a tree, gave it him, bidding him form an instrument therefrom. Still more perplexed, the sage pondered on his hard task, but without effect, until a second time the water-goddess appeared, this time bringing with her a handful of white stones from the bottom of the river, which she bade him enclose in the gourd. Thus was made the first rattle—and perhaps the first instrument which human ear ever heard.

So sacred and so miraculous did the South American Indians deem this discovery, that the rattle thus invented became an idol, which, with a worship peculiar to that continent, is adored with the same ceremonies and devotion which other uncivilised peoples pay to a figure of wood or stone. Numerous are the myths connected with this musical idol and its remarkable exploits. In many parts of Brazil it has, or used to have, a regular fraternity of priests devoted to its service, who regulate the ceremonies and enjoy the various benefits connected with their ministry. They consult the musical idol, on the payment of a certain fee by the laity—causing it to rattle so many times, and interpreting its responses with as much credulity and good faith as did the priests of Dodona the cooing of the doves. Sacrifices are offered to the idol at stated times, consisting of flesh and fruits, a hole being made in the side of the rattle to represent the mouth, and the choicest dainties pushed through there to satisfy the appetite of the god. Sometimes even human sacrifices are offered to this musical deity;

and warriors on the eve of a battle pass the night in silent prayer at its shrine.

Music has been used and is still employed by many uncivilised races to predict the future. The drum is the usual instrument appropriated to the office of divination, possibly for the very good reason that primitive peoples as a rule have no other. The Lapland wizards, who to the present day retain their ascendancy over the credulity of their countrymen, paint the luminaries of the sky upon their drum heads, together with figures of the earth, rivers, trees, mountains, &c., pretending that the instrument was the direct creator of the harmony of the world, in the manner of Amalivaca's drum, as we have just described it. This being assumed true, what more likely than that the same drum which reared the structure of the universe shall be able with very little trouble to give information relative to its affairs—in one word, to predict the future. By interpretation of its tapping, the drummers undertake to foretell the weather and the approach of storms, the probable success in hunting, the issue of any trade or barter in which a Laplander may be engaged. The drum serves these professors of its excellence as a sort of divining-rod, not unlike the hazel wand once so famous, by means of which they can discover a lost reindeer, or the whereabouts on the frosty plains of any article that has been dropped from a sledge. Among the Samoiedes and the tribes of northern Asiatic Russia the drum passes almost to an idol. They address it, erect it in their hut, and the priests of the superstition by the aid of the divine instrument effect that magical 'disappearance' which has puzzled all travellers from Sir Hugh Willoughby downwards to account for, and has given rise to as much guesswork at its elucidation as the feats of the Indian jugglers. The Samoiede, after beating his drum and working up the senses of his spectators to a pitch of great excitement, mysteriously vanishes into thin air before the eyes of all. Civilised travellers naturally hold that it is a trick. The Samoiedes themselves declare that the power resides in the drum-idol. The peculiar thing is that neither one party nor the other has been able to explain how the vanishing occurs.

The North American Indians, whose legends are a most interesting mine of strange traditions, make the drum the instrument of the angels. A tired hunter, once lost on the prairie, and overcome with fatigue and despair, lay down on the sward and fell asleep; when, behold, in his dream he saw the heavens open, and a car made of osiers descending from the sky with inconceivable rapidity. In the car were twelve beautiful girls with golden wings, who played celestial music upon drums of gold. Among them was his dead wife, thus sent to him by the Great Spirit to show him the right way out of the labyrinthine prairie. She directed him, pointing with her drumstick in the way in which he should go. The car flew up; the hunter awoke; and the heavens were resounding with the drums of the celestial maidens and of the angels in the vaults above.

A strange pendant to this tale, denoting still more strikingly the sanctity of the instrument, is to be found in another Indian legend supplemented by a practice. At stated festivals among

certain tribes, the elders of the tribe produce four sacred drums filled with water. Into these they affirm the waters of the world subsided after the deluge. They beat upon them, they say, to imitate the action of the Great Spirit, who by this simple musical means divided the earth from the waters, and restored order to the flooded globe.

The Mexicans were at a high point of civilisation at the time of the conquest; and their god of music—answering to Apollo among the Greeks—was Tezcatlipoca, to whom the flute was sacred. Tezcatlipoca was the most beautiful of all deities of the sky, and, in profound compassion for the miseries of man, had brought music from heaven on a bridge made of whales and turtles. These animals, transfixed with rapture at his beautiful song, had joined body to body in an illimitable line, all the whales and turtles in the ocean co-operating to form the endless pile, till the bridge reached from the waves of the sea to the skyey realms where Tezcatlipoca sat. Then the divinity arose, and clad in pure white, with twenty golden bells jingling round his ankles, and at his lips a silver flute, which he played in a most harmonious melody, he descended to the realms of mortal man. He taught flute-playing and the fabrication of that instrument to the Mexican priests, who, in his honour and out of gratitude to him for the boon, instituted the following singular ceremony. Once a year they chose the handsomest youth in Mexico, and dressed him in the same manner in which Tezcatlipoca had appeared to them with the golden bells round his ankles, and the constantly warbling flute in his hand. He was worshipped as a god for the whole year. At the end of that time he was sacrificed on an altar of jasper to the god of music, who required his life. The sacrifice took place on the top of one of the pyramid temples; and on his way up the interminable staircase, the unfortunate youth, followed by a priest carrying a sheaf of flutes, broke one flute against each step, to show that his glory and his delights as the incarnation of Tezcatlipoca were over at last.

The Chinese have extraordinary superstitions relating to music. According to them, the creator of the universe hid eight sounds in the earth, for the express purpose of impelling mortal man to find them out; on the same principle, we presume, that Jupiter in Virgil hides fire in flint and honey in trees, in order to whet the ardour of man's industry in re-discovering the treasures. In stone, in metal, in silk, in wood, in bamboo, in pumpkins, in the skins of animals, and in certain earths, these sounds, according to the Chinese, are hidden. The musical instruments of their orchestra are all made of one or other of these substances, and the naive credulity of the people hears in the thuds of the gongs and the whistling of the pipes the tones of the eternal sounds of nature and the universe, as deposited in the strata of the earth by the Almighty Father. How was the musical scale first invented? That query, which has troubled the theorists of all lands, and has had its answer hitherto only in mystifying speculations and unintelligible theories, the Chinese will reply to by a legend most ingenious and most apropos, which, they hold, offers a complete explanation of the mystery. In the reign of Hoang-ty, they say, there was once a prince called Lyng-lun, who was the most beauti-

ful man and at the same time the most profound musician in China. He, under pain of a severe penalty by the order-loving emperor, was commanded to arrange and regulate Chinese music on the same principle whereon Hoang-ty had arranged law and politics throughout the Chinese empire. Full of thought, Lyng-lun wandered to the land of Si-jaung, where the bamboos grow. Having taken one of them, he cut it off between two of the knots, and pushing out the pith, blew into the hollow. The bamboo uttered a most beautiful note, to Lyng-lun's intense surprise. Simultaneously, the river Hoang-ho, which ran boiling by, roared with its waves, and the tone was in unison with the note of the bamboo. 'Behold,' cried Lyng-lun, 'the fundamental sound of nature!' Two magical birds then came and perched themselves upon some trees near, and sang one after the other the seven notes of the scale, starting from the tone which had been roared by the Hoang-ho and warbled by the bamboo. Here is a scale, say the Chinese, at once intelligible, inimitable, and easily revealed. Lyng-lun had merely to cut seven more bamboos and tune them to the pitches he had heard, and the scale was made. This he did; and thus was the art of music inaugurated and founded by Hoang-ty's court musician on a firm and unalterable basis.

Passing to the musical myths of European nations, the stories of the Greeks and Romans need not be here recapitulated, as containing little that could come in the shape of novelty. The middle ages were a prolific source of musical myth, and the learned chroniclers who did not hesitate to regard Alexander as a knight-errant who overthrew Darius in the lists, and Julius Cæsar as an emperor elected by the European diet which contained Pompey, Cato, Atticus, Scipio, and Solomon as its five electors, were not at all distressed by the often asked question, What is the origin of music in the world? According to them, there existed at the time of Noah a celebrated king entitled Blegabres. He lived before the Flood, and inhabited a land where, in the manner of a less illustrious namesake of his, King Cole by name, not only did music flow most sweetly, but other things besides of a more ardent nature, notably wine, beer, and meat. There is here perhaps a direct allusion to Noah's intoxication, but nothing is stated thereon in the tale. King Blegabres lived in this happy land, and listened all day long to the strains of cornet, psaltery, sackbut, &c.—in fact, the court breathed eternal music, as, according to Homer, the court of Æolus, king of the winds, is described, no less graphically and mysteriously, as doing. The memory of King Blegabres and his court, washed out by the Flood, was after a while revived by St Julian, the patron saint of minstrels, who, by a divine intuition, was enabled to report concerning the infancy of the musical art.

The Wends, who, we believe, are the ancestors of the modern Prussians, are the centre of many legends. The Pied Piper of Hamelin was a Wend; so also was the piper of the Harz Mountains, who appeared so many days a year, and played unearthly tunes, and whosoever heard at once fell into a frenzy, from which there was no escaping. All these pied and weird pipers assem-

bled once a year at the Brocken, where there was a general carnival, the Arch Fiend leading the concert on a violin, witches rolling round and fiddling on the skulls of horses, and the pipers adding the concert of their unholy instruments.

Most of the legends of the middle ages introduce a diabolical element into the music; and in concluding this short accumulation of musical myths we may remark as strange that the traditions of the art, which in early times and even among savage nations are the holiest and the highest, describing its influence as the diffusion of peace and order, and making gods and angels its expositors, should suddenly, when the middle ages are reached, take such an unexpected turn, regarding music as the direct production of the Evil One, and in every sense of the word sacrilegious and profane.

DUMARESQ'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXXII.—SHOPPING.

A FEW days after her arrival in Algiers, Psyche had so far recovered from her fatigue that Geraldine Maitland arranged a party to go down into the town together.

The winter visitors at Algiers live entirely on the Mustapha hill, at a distance of some two or three miles from the town and harbour. A breakneck Arab path, sunk deep in the soil like a Devonshire lane, leads the foot-passenger in a straight line by tumble-down steps to the outskirts and the shore: omnibuses and carriages follow the slower zigzags of a broad modern highway that winds by gentle gradients round numerous elbows to the town walls at the Porte d'Isly. Psyche and the Vanrenens, under Geraldine's guidance, took the comfortable tram (the horse-car, Cyrus called it) by this latter route, and descended gradually to the ramparts of the French engineers.

Once within the gate, in Algiers proper, Psyche felt herself immediately in the very thick and heart of Islam. Who shall describe that wonderful dramatic Oriental world—ever old, yet ever new; busy with human life as bees at a swarming, or ants when a stick has been poked into their nest; all seething and fermenting in a Babel of tongues, and hurrying and scurrying on every side for no possible or conceivable earthly reason? Algiers is the most fascinating and animated of Mediterranean towns. Dirty, malodorous, African if you will, but alive all over, and intensely attractive and alluring for all that, in its crowded streets and courts and alleys. Psyche was not lucky enough to meet on her entry a laden caravan of solemn long-legged camels, striding placidly out on their start for the desert; but the donkeys, the mules, the Moors, the Arabs, the infinite variety of colour and costume, amply sufficed to keep her attention alive as they threaded their way through that quaint jumble of all Mediterranean and African nationalities.

Geraldine, to whom all this was as familiar as Petherton, led them lightly through the vestibule of the town. Psyche was amused, in spite of her sadness, at the curious jumble of transparent incongruities in that antique new-fangled Franco-Moorish Algiers. Here, a little French *épicerie*,

ensconced half hidden in an ill-lighted shop, where Provençal bourgeois folk served out small odds and ends to bareheaded negroes; there, an Arab café, darker and dirtier still, where dusky cross-legged figures in Oriental costume, innocent of the laundry, smoked doubtful tobacco and tossed off cups of black steaming Mocha; and yonder, again, a little bazaar for Moorish curiosities, where a Barbary Jew in dark-coloured turban, jacket, and sash, ogled them in with oleaginous smile to inspect his cheap stock of Birmingham antiquities. At every step Psyche stopped irresistibly to gaze and smile; the town itself and all its stream of passengers unrolled itself in long and endless perspective like a living panorama before her attentive eyes.

They passed a big square with a well-kept garden of the formal French sort; a theatre that for size and imposing front might almost compare with the finest in Paris; a close-piled insanitary Arab quarter, by no means running with milk and rose-water; a tangle of lanes threading their way steeply up hill in every possible direction except a straight line, for which native architects appear to harbour an instinctive dislike; a narrow courtyard open to the sky; a white-washed mosque, where a respectable gray-bearded native *cadi* squatted cross-legged on the floor doing equal justice by summary process between his Arab neighbours. Railways, tram-cars, donkeys, and omnibuses; a European brass band, and a group of red-cloaked Arabs from the desert; Moorish squalor, dirt, and discomfort; the kiosques and journals and loungers of the boulevards! The main street through which they made their tortuous way was arcaded like Paris; but oh, what a difference in the surging crowd that thronged and filled it in unending variety! Arab, Moor, Kabyle, and Negro; Jewesses with their heads enclosed in tight black skull-caps, and their chins tied up as if they suffered perennially from an aggravated complication of mumps and toothache; and Mussulman women who showed above their veil but their great black eyes, yet coquetted so freely with those and their twitching fingers in the corners of their robes that Cyrus almost ceased to wonder as he passed at their prudent lords' precautionary measures.

They turned round by the brand-new minarets of the modernised cathedral, and entered the narrow little Rue de la Lyre. Ahmed ben Abd-er-Rahman (may Allah increase him!) has a Moorish shop in that dark thoroughfare which is the joy and delight of all feminine sojourners in the tents of Shem. Corona's face lighted up with pleasure. 'Why, we're going to Abd-er-Rahman's,' she exclaimed with much delight. 'That's nice, Miss Dumaresq. I do just love a good day's shopping down here in the Moorish part of the city.'

'Don't call me "Miss Dumaresq,"' Psyche said gently. 'Call me Psyche, won't you?'

Corona drew back in genuine hesitation. 'May I?' she asked. 'Well, I do call that real nice of you, now. I was afraid to be too much at home with Haviland Dumaresq's daughter, you see. But you ain't set up. It's right kind and friendly of you—that's just what it is. And will you call us Sirena and Corona?'

Psyche in her turn drew back, hesitating. 'Why, I thought you so grand when I first saw

you,' she said, taken aback. 'I was afraid to talk to you, almost, I was so dreadfully frightened.'

'Well, I do call that good now,' Corona cried, laughing.—'Say, Sirena, here's Psyche says when she first saw us she was most afraid to speak at table to us!'

'Well, I want to know!' Sirena exclaimed, much amused. 'Afraid of you and me, Corona!'

They both laughed at it as a very good joke; and Psyche, she knew not why, laughed too, for their merriment was contagious. They had reached by this time a darkling corridor in the dingy side-street, under whose gloomy arch Geraldine plunged undismayed, and led them all blindfold into a central court, where Psyche found herself at once, to her sudden surprise, in a perfect paradise of Oriental art, set out in an unaffected living museum of Oriental architecture. The courtyard was tiled and roofed in with glass: round the lower floor ran a pretty open arcade of Saracenic arches; the upper story was also arcaded, but hemmed in by balustrades of pierced wood-work, carved and latticed like a mediæval screen in exquisite patterns. All round lay the usual farrago of Eastern curiosities: Damascus lamps, and Persian saddle-cloths, and Morocco jars, and Algerian embroideries, all scattered about loosely in picturesque confusion. In the centre, sat solid old Abd-er-Rahman himself in dignified silence—a massive old Moor in an embroidered coat and ample turban; he rose as Geraldine Maitland entered, and bowed her into his shop with stately courtesies.

'You're tired, dear,' Geraldine said to her friend, as she turned to mount the stairs to the second floor. 'The girls and I'll go up and look at the things in the gallery there.—Mr Vanrenen, you'll stop down here with Psyche, and find her a chair, for she mustn't fatigue herself.'

'Why, certainly,' Cyrus answered, nothing loth. He had a vested interest in Psyche now. He had seen a good deal of the pink-and-white English girl during these last few days—more white than pink, of late, unhappily: and what with Sirena's hints and Geraldine Maitland's obduracy, he had almost begun to consider with himself the leading question whether one high-toned Englishwoman mightn't do at a pinch almost as well in the end as another. So he sat and talked with her with a very good grace, while Corona and Sirena cheapened trays and Koran stands with Abd-er-Rahman himself in the upper gallery.

They waited long, and Cyrus at last began to covet in turn some of the pretty embroideries that lay heaped in piles on one another around them. He turned a few over carelessly with his hands. 'There's a beauty, now,' he said, taking up a long strip of antique Tunisian needlework and holding it out at arm's-length before Psyche. 'I expect Corona wouldn't mind that bit, Miss Dumaresq.'

'It is lovely,' Psyche said, 'as lovely as a picture. How much—an artist—would admire a piece like that now, Mr Vanrenen!'

She said 'an artist,' but she meant in her heart Linnell. Her mind went back at a bound to those old days at Petherton. Cyrus threw it lightly and gracefully round her shoulder. Your American, even though unskilled in the courtesy of words, has always a certain practical gracefulness in his treatment of women. He regards

them as something too fragile and costly to be roughly handled. 'It becomes you, Miss Dumaresq,' he said, gazing at her admiringly. 'You look quite a picture in it. It'd make up beautifully for evening dress, I expect.'

Psyche trembled lest he should buy that too. 'Papa wouldn't like me to wear it, though,' she put in hastily. 'I'm sure he wouldn't let me. It's against his principles.'

Cyrus leaned back on his chair and surveyed her with a certain distant chivalrous regard. 'That's a pity,' he answered, 'for I'd like to give it to you.'

Psyche made haste to decline the kindly-meant suggestion. 'Oh, how good of you!' she cried. 'But you mustn't, please. I'd rather you wouldn't.—Why, you seem to buy everything that takes your fancy. How awfully rich you must be, Mr Vanrenen!'

'Well, I ain't in want,' Cyrus admitted frankly. 'I can afford most anything I feel I'm in need of.'

'I've never known any rich people before,' Psyche said abstractedly, for want of something better to say. 'Papa thinks poor people are more the right sort for us to know.'

'No?' Cyrus murmured with genuine regret. He liked Psyche, and he wanted her to like him.

Psyche played with the corner of the embroidery, embarrassed. She felt she had said one of the things she had rather have left unsaid. 'But he likes *you*,' she went on with her charming smile. 'In fact, we both like you.'

'No?' Cyrus said again, in a very pleased voice. 'Now I call that real nice and friendly of him, Miss Dumaresq.'

Psyche folded up the embroidery and replaced it on the heap. This interview was beginning to get embarrassingly long. Just as she was wondering what on earth she could say next, Geraldine Maitland came down the steps with Corona and Sirena to relieve her from her painfully false position.

'Where next?' Cyrus exclaimed, jumping up from his seat. 'Sirena always goes the rounds of the stores regularly when she comes into the city.'

'To the photographer's,' Sirena said; 'I want some of those lovely views of the ragged boys.—These little Arab chaps are just sweet, Miss Maitland.'

So they went to Famin's in the Rue Bab-Azoun, where Sirena had seen the particular photographs she so specially coveted.

Psyche's eyes gave her no trouble now. She entered the shop and gazed around it fearlessly. On an easel in the corner was a painting of an Arab girl, standing under a doorway in the native town. Psyche's heart came up into her mouth as her gaze fell upon it. She was no judge of art, but love had taught her better than years in museums or galleries could ever have done to know one artist's hand. She recognised in a moment that unmistakable touch. It was a specimen of Linnell's Algerian subjects!

The colour fled from her cheek all at once. She gazed at it hard, and took it all in slowly. Then, all of a sudden, as she still looked, for the first time since she arrived in Algeria, the shop and the picture faded away before her. She

groped her way over to a chair in her distress. Thick darkness enveloped the world. Cyrus, astonished, led her over to a chair. 'Thank you,' she said, as she seated herself upon it. 'Geraldine—my eyes'— She could get no further.

Geraldine understood it all with feminine quickness. She beckoned Cyrus out of the shop quietly. 'Run for a *fiacre*,' she said, herself all trembling. 'You'll find one opposite the mosque in the square. Her eyes have gone again. I know what's the matter. That's one of the pictures Mr Linnell painted. Psyche was very much attached to him indeed, and he died at Khartoum. I tell you this to secure your help. Don't say anything more about it than you can avoid at the Orangers. And tell Corona and Sirena to keep it quite quiet.'

Cyrus nodded assent. 'You may depend upon me,' he said; and he was off at full speed to get the *fiacre*. When it arrived, he led out Psyche with tender care, and placed her like a brother in the corner of the cushions. They drove up in silence, for the most part, Geraldine alone having the courage to make occasional pretences at conversation. By the time they reached the gate of the Orangers, the veil had fallen again from Psyche's eyes. But her father, who met her at the door with his searching glance, was not to be deceived. 'Your sight went again,' he said with awe as he scanned her pallid face. And Psyche, too truthful to try to hide it, answered merely, 'Yes, Papa,' and hid her sorrow straightway in her own little bedroom.

OUR CITY OF NATIONS.

THE cosmopolitan character of London is generally known, but perhaps indifferently realised. Statistics are sometimes presented showing how large an army of strangers is in occupation, and of what curiously mixed contingents it consists. But it is hard to clothe such figures with the interest that would bring about their proper appreciation. And the wonderful, mobile, shifting mass is a marvel from so many points of view, that curiosity is easily satiated without considering details. The great metropolitan hive may fitly be called a 'City of Nations.' Make a leisurely, observant exploration of certain districts, some of which have well-defined boundaries though no Custom-house officer inflicts the ignominy of inspection and no passport is demanded. Talk with the inhabitants. Note how the musical tongue of the far-off southern vineyard, and the *patois* of the mountain, and the guttural speech of the plains between great rivers, 'shadows' in the conversation the troublesome English—fair copy or ludicrous travesty. Study the men and the manners, the dress and the ruling occupations of each separate and contrasted locality. Then come back to the numbers recorded in official sheets, or in an Encyclopædia, and they will be dry and meaningless no longer.

At the head of the list, in point of numbers, of Continental peoples represented are the Germans. A steady stream of recruits from the Fatherland has for many a year poured into English counting-houses. Not every one is pleased by the competition thus rendered more rigorous. Home-bred clerks grumble; they say the bread is taken

from their mouths; and the sense of injury sustained is keen. But the remedy must surely be to win such an equipment as to warrant expectation of success whatever the press of alien applicants. Let our young clerks have as much plodding industry, indomitable perseverance, and concentration of purpose, as the Germans, and get to know as many languages, and their risk of being passed in the race will be much reduced.

Naturally, the tide of German immigration has greatly scattered itself. A cheap home has to be sought by the majority of the newcomers, and they turn east, west, north, or south, as opportunity directs. The room or rooms that suit may be in Islington or Kennington or away at Stratford. There are always means to bring the worker to his work for a few pence.

As the crow flies south from St Paul's, it is no far cast to a true German colony. Here, on the edge of Camberwell, Denmark Hill rises. As the reading world knows, and as Camberwell residents doubtless delight to remember, many of the scenes in *Madcap Violet* are placed in this locality; and Mr William Black incidentally refers in his novel to the prevalence of the German idiom. His heroine waits in Victoria Station, and others are waiting too: 'Friends bound for the same house. They were joking merrily. They were young Germans, and a trifle boisterous.' Well-to-do merchants reside hereabouts, perhaps some of those who figure in the column and three-quarters devoted to the letter Z in the commercial section of the Post-office Directory, and who are German or Polish almost to a man. And near to the station is a little German church, where the Lutheran service is rendered, and the spirit-stirring hymns of the reformer, whose words were 'half-battles,' are often sung.

The number of Kaiser Wilhelm's self-exiled sons and daughters of the Iron Empire in town and suburb, together with London-born descendants of German parents, is reckoned at upwards of sixty thousand. In the war-time twenty years ago, there was of course a great fluctuation; but now the figures may be said to grow daily.

France sends the English metropolis about half as many of her children. There has been a history belonging to repeated arrivals of companies. In bygone centuries they generally crossed Channel in the character of refugees, and they found Londoners uniformly hospitable. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes about the end of the seventeenth century brought over a very great number of resolute Huguenots. They settled in Soho, Leicester Square, and St Giles, in Chelsea, and Wandsworth. The Reign of Terror caused many royalists to seek shelter in the district about Southampton Row, in Somers Town, and elsewhere. The tide never set back again; and others drifted over and joined the descendants of the older and compulsory exiles. At a date now remote, the region around Leicester Square had the fame which it still keeps of a foreign ground within an English city. Here was the true 'Petty France,' though York Street, Westminster, once had the name from its homes of foreign wool-staplers. William Maitland, the topographer, in his *History of London* (1739), says that in this vicinity it was 'an easy matter for a stranger to fancy himself in France.' If the diffi-

culty of such a mental feat has increased, it is because of the greater fullness and variety of the constant traffic current, not through any replacement of the abiding French sights and sounds by purely insular ones. The Gaul is still in these quiet back streets, these noisy short-cuts, these restaurants, these haunts of unfamiliar industries. The shops show at once to the initiated critic the nationality of the common customer. The foreign names are in keeping now with the wares in the windows. The provision-dealers make the many condiments that are so dear to the French palate a leading 'line' in their trade. Small 'generals' are here in profusion, but there is a special stamp upon their stock. The British artisan would be at a loss to know how to use a large proportion of their wares. And then, as has been hinted, peculiar callings are followed in the shabby, heated, evil-smelling back buildings. The man in the blouse, volatile, fierce, given to gesticulation, bends over strange pipe-carving or dresses hats with the true Parisian gloss. If times are bad and the prevailing moods morose or sardonic, the stray inquisitor may hear himself satirised in untranslatable communistic slang.

The Frenchman is not behind his traditional adversary, the German, in fraternising with his fellow-exiles. Social clubs exist in considerable numbers, and have many shades of worth and unworth. They preserve and foster the spirit of nationality. When one of them is in session—of course in a house which is French as to its master, French as to its appointments large and small, French as to its atmosphere, object, and language—the whole might be transported entire, like a piece of stage furniture, and dropped into a niche in some faubourg by the Seine, and provoke no comment by its incongruity.

The Italians in London are fewer; but they also have their colonies—each a small 'reserve' in the big city-state, a subsidiary centre in the great maelstrom. Hatton Garden is such a rendezvous. In the rough square shut in by Gray's Inn Road, Holborn, Theobalds Road, and Farringdon Road, numbers of swarthy street musicians, *chefs*, and art workmen, more or less skilled, congregate. It is not exactly an inviting locality. The streets hint at changed years and lost gentility. Things are not as they were when Wycherley, the author of the *Plain Dealer*, came here to seek for his wife the rich and lovely young widow, the Countess of Drogheda. But given a sunny day and Imagination's kaleidoscope, and patterns of the brilliant South shall be found here. Step into an Italian restaurant and note the sombrero of the Florentine, the high slanting hat of the Savoyard, the gay head-dress of the girl who touches a tambourine with airy fingers and a changeless petition in the sloe-like eyes, and a smile which says: 'Signor, you must be rich here in your London; I want to think that you are also kind.' Observe the jewellery, the bright yet not inharmonious colours, the regular features, the olive complexion of the artist's model, who stands at the first counter paying part of her slender fee for strange oozing cake, the taste for which not less than the making would be a mystery to an English maiden. And others are passing without. See you not the deep unfathomable azure of Roman skies bending over

the white headgear? Is not that a glimpse of the Campagna beyond the Roman plaid scarf? Alas for the girls! it is just Fancy's trick. A few steps nearer the thunder of Holborn, and the illusion fades.

The indicative 'i' is the last letter now over many a window and on many a doorplate. At certain hours and seasons the organ-grinder is much in presence. Frequently he hires his 'machine,' and the bond regularly brings him to and fro. There are people, studious persons particularly, who regard this man as a true Ishmael, with his 'organ'-hand against every man, and would incontinently suppress him. But away in the interminable streets, which are all so like each other, and so bare of colour or of change, he is less unwelcome. The lads and lasses are his patrons. He is the humble minister of some hope that after all the world is not a dead level.

Extreme poverty is the lot of many Italians in London, and in Hatton Garden the hard fact is practically recognised. In Greville Street are the offices of a very useful relieving institution, initiated by the home government of these waifs, and presided over by the Italian ambassador. The Italian Benevolent Society does a good work.

The Dutch dwellers in London number at least fifteen thousand, and the Poles almost as many. Owing probably to the paternal and ultra conservative constitution prevailing as yet in Russia, the subjects of the Czar are less frequently met with. The Greeks, who may some day go into rivalry with the Colossus of the North for the ultimate ownership of Constantinople, are fifteen thousand strong. The City knows the Greek merchants well. On the Mark Lane Corn Exchange they almost monopolise the importation of grain and of seeds from every country figuring in the lists of supply. But the residences of these masters of London's food are often far afield, and not necessarily in the same quarter. As wealth increases, the gregarious instinct seems to lose its power.

There has been another nation settled in the metropolis in the persons of a compact body of representatives from early times; and in many respects this people is the most separate and self-contained of any. Observation would perpetually point them out for a unique race, even if history, sacred and profane, did not bear this witness. They have been oppressed, contemned, persecuted; they have never been absorbed. Beaten into the dust by race-hatred, extermination has always proved impossible. There are believed to be forty thousand Jews in London. The ancient Jewry was in the immediate neighbourhood of the Tower. A peep at its stormy records is given in the pages of Stow. Ultimately, the quarter given up to the Jews comprised some part of Spitalfields, of Whitechapel, Houndsditch, the Minorities and Bevis Marks. Social and race division located them severely in a sort of Ghetto. Since the temper of the time became tolerant they have spread even into the far suburbs. There is a section of the West where an entirely new Jewish colony has slowly congregated. In spite, however, of this modification of rigorous line and limit, the old spots retain the old characteristics. The nation is itself in its own streets and in its own

callings—both held of prescriptive right. No error can be made concerning the prevailing type by the most completely uninformed wayfarer who wanders into the byways east of the Royal Exchange. Prejudice has said numberless hard things of the seedy-looking men whom you shall see standing at the doors of stuffy shops, or hear cheapening a suit with an obstinate accent that will never be smooth English. But they have also found their defenders. Chronic dinginess and disregard of soap and water have been charged against them. Says Henry Mayhew: 'The Jew old-clothesmen are generally far more cleanly in their habits than the poorer classes of English people. Their hands they always wash before their meals, and this is done whether the party be a strict Jew or "meshumet," a convert or apostate from Judaism.'

And in these districts there are the same distinctive signs in dress, in cast of countenance, in articles displayed in beetle-browed windows or upon street stalls, and in the current gibe and repartee of the thoroughfare, that speak of the stranger possessing his parcel of bricks and mortar within the gates. Pay the people visits at various times, inquire the meaning of much that passes, and a whole world of hidden custom and tribal habit will be brought to light. The Jews of London are not swept into the vortex of change. They are a nation in the great city still, peculiar in the routine of daily life, in feast and fast, in religious observance and the shaping of social ties.

The list of metropolitan nationalities does not close here. From every clime they come—the Turk, the Portuguese, the Spaniard, the Norwegian, the Swiss, the lithe Asiatic, the dusky African. London receives them all, and, alas for the difficulty of wise almsgiving, starves some. Many a foreigner seeks gold, and finds but a grave on Thames-side. There is a profound pathos, as well as a cause for marvel and pride, in the thought of the far ends of the earth gathered into Our City of Nations.

THE ROMANCE OF A SUMMER.

CHAPTER III.

LETTING her eyes fall once more on to her book, Avie felt the hot blood surging up into her cheeks. Who or what was this man, whose very presence seemed to fill her with uneasiness, and why had he come into that unfrequented glen? These questions rose unconsciously to her mind as she bent, or rather tried to bend, her eyes upon the printed matter before her until such time as it should please the intruder to pass on. But if she had hoped by her unconscious air to send him away she was doomed to disappointment, for, taking up his stand almost directly in front of her, he said politely: 'Have I the honour of addressing Miss Sacharty?'

The low musical tones and the slightly foreign accent with which he uttered these words attracted her strangely, and with a slight bow she acknowledged the truth of his words.

'Ah!' he cried, seating himself unbidden on the turf near her, 'that is indeed delightful! Your father is one of my greatest and most valued friends.'

Avice did not reply for a moment; she was too much astonished to say anything, until the man's curious dark eyes fixed themselves suddenly on hers with a strange intense gaze and seemed to drag an answer from her.

'You come, then, from India?' she said, idly turning over the pages of her book.

'From India, yes,' he replied, a swift smile parting for a moment the thin line of his lips. 'I am Indian myself, or rather Malay. My name is Tehandar Mutwane, at your service.—I read your name in the books,' he added by way of explanation, 'and I thought it must be the daughter of my old friend.'

Avice smiled. Somehow, in spite of her first feeling of dislike, the man fascinated her, and she no longer felt the impulse to run away which she had had at first; and for some time they sat on there, under the whispering trees, chatting about India, which Avice remembered but faintly, any allusion to it having always been discouraged by her aunt.

At last the lengthening shadows warned them that time was getting on, and they returned to the hotel, Tehandar carrying the rug and book, which he delivered up into Avice's keeping as she went up-stairs.

'We shall meet again at dinner,' he said with a smile as he turned away. 'I will contrive to sit near you, and then we can talk about India again.'

Avice nodded brightly, and ran up-stairs to seek her friend, whom she found already dressing for dinner.

She looked decidedly astonished when the girl related her adventure. 'Are you quite sure he is what he pretends—your father's friend?' she asked doubtfully. 'It would be so easy for any one, attracted by your name, to fabricate a tale in order to make your acquaintance.'

'Oh yes, I know; but he seemed to know all about papa—things, I mean, which only a friend would know; and besides, he knew Aunt Amelia by name; he asked after her. And he said he had seen me when I was quite a tiny baby.'

'Oh well, I suppose it is all right,' returned Mrs Douglas, examining her hair critically with the hand-glass. 'But do be quick dressing, my dear; we shall be fearfully late if you don't make haste.'

And Avice fled to her own room, which was just beyond, and began making up for lost time, her mind all the while occupied with her afternoon's experiences and Tehandar Mutwane.

It was not long before she joined Mrs Douglas, and they went down-stairs together. Tehandar Mutwane was standing before the fire, which, in consideration of the chilliness of the evening air, burnt brightly on the hearth. He advanced to meet them as they entered.

'My friend, Mrs Douglas—Mr Mutwane,' said Avice shyly, by way of introduction.

The Malay bowed profoundly. 'I am charmed to make Mrs Douglas's acquaintance,' he returned in those soft mellow tones of his; 'and shall feel proud if I, too, may be reckoned among the list of her friends.'

Mrs Douglas acknowledged his greeting with a slight bend of her golden head, and passed on to Mrs Barfelt's side, leaving Avice to talk

to her new acquaintance, who, with no conscious will on her part, fascinated her more and more.

'It seems so strange to meet a countryman and a friend of my father's, here,' she said, smiling, as Mutwane gallantly led her into dinner. 'Such an odd coincidence, you know!'

A curious smile lit up the dark face of the other as she spoke. 'A pleasant one, too, I hope,' he murmured softly. 'For me, it is, at anyrate.'

Avice did not reply for a moment; then again she felt that obligation to answer. 'Yes, very,' she returned shyly, turning her attention to the *menu* card by her side.

Her companion glanced at it too, with the air of a connoisseur. 'Fish, soup, partridge (roasted), fricassée of mutton—um, um, um. I should recommend some of this, *poulets au riz*,' he said, as Avice laid down the card. 'As an *entrée* it is very good.'

If there was one thing she detested it was *poulets au riz*. 'I don't really think I will have that,' she returned as she tasted the soup; 'I am not partial to chicken.'

Her companion said nothing at this moment; but as the waiter whisked away her plate, he looked quietly at her, saying, more in the tone of one who makes an assertion than of one asking a question: 'You will change your mind, and take some chicken, will you not?'

And then it appeared to the girl as if, after all, she would change her mind; and mechanically, like one saying a lesson, she ordered the waiter to bring her chicken, instead of—as she had at first intended—partridge; and again that curious half-mocking smile stole into the black eyes of Mutwane.

This little incident made her rather uneasy—a faint vague fear of this strange man, who fascinated while he alarmed her, came upon her, and she was not sorry when they rose from the table.

On the hall table, on her way to the drawing-room, she found a letter from her father. It was dated Berlin, and bore the German post-mark; but in it Mr Sacharty announced that he was returning to England almost directly, and hoped that he might see something of his daughter before long, as he was engaged to stay with friends in the neighbourhood of Strath Carron. He added that he had heard from an old friend of his who was going to Strath Carron—'and who, indeed, will be there ere this reaches you; and I hope and trust that for my sake you will treat him with all courtesy and kindness,' the letter went on, 'for to Tehandar Mutwane I owe more than I can tell you of friendship and respect.'

The girl's eyes sparkled as she read this. 'How very odd!' she murmured; 'but it will satisfy Mrs Douglas of his respectability.'

And as events turned out, Mrs Douglas was only too glad to be convinced of his respectability and general fitness to be Avice's companion; for she had just discovered an old friend in a certain Mrs Digby Browne, who had arrived that afternoon, and was too busily engaged in chatting about old times to pay much attention to the girl.

'I wonder what Aunt Amelia would think of him,' thought Avice to herself later on that same

evening as she brushed out her long wavy hair. She had a dim consciousness, somehow, that Miss Marchmont would not altogether approve of Tehandar Mutwane; and yet what there was to dislike in him she could not say. Polished, agreeable, highly cultivated, with a flow of language and store of anecdote which were surprising, he certainly made a most charming companion; and in spite of her half-acknowledged fear of him, Avice drew a fairly-glowing picture of him in her letter to her aunt ere she retired to rest that evening. But one thing she did not mention, and that was the curious manner in which she felt compelled to execute his will in the veriest trifles, and the sense of nervous oppression which seized her every now and then when his eyes were upon her.

It was the custom in the hotel for any visitors who wished to have letters posted for them to place them on a tray put for that purpose on a table in the hall, when they were taken to the post by one of the servants. As a rule, Avice preferred posting her letters herself, disliking the publicity of the hall table; but the next morning, being somewhat in a hurry, and fearing to keep Mrs Douglas waiting, she placed Miss Marchmont's letter on the tray as she went out. It was about eleven o'clock, and all the other visitors had already gone out, either to the baths or on some expedition—all, that is, save one. Tehandar Mutwane was sitting in the smoking-room as Avice passed through the hall, and seeing her through the half-open door placing a letter on the table, he slipped out as soon as she had gone and proceeded to examine the address. Something in it seemed to displease him, for he gave a low grunt of dissatisfaction, and then, hearing footsteps coming, replaced it quickly and began searching for his hat. The footsteps drew nearer, and soon the red head of Andrew, one of the waiters, appeared round a corner. He looked curiously at the dark face of Mutwane as he passed, and the latter, who was struggling into a greatcoat of enormous thickness, returned his gaze with interest, until his pale blue eyes were obliged to fall beneath the piercing black orbs.

'Shall I take this to the post for you?' said Mutwane, politely indicating Avice's letter as he spoke. Andrew, as he knew, was the one generally told off for such errands.

The waiter glanced at him sharply. He was not accustomed to having his work done for him, but neither was he inclined to refuse a good offer. 'Thank ye, sir,' he replied slowly. 'I dinna think there could be muckle harm, if ye're gaun to the town.'

And Tehandar, hastily availing himself of the permission, took up the letter and went his way. But he did not go towards the village; on the contrary, he turned his back upon it; and Avice's letter never reached the post, but lay opened and crumpled in his inner pocket for many a long day.

Days came and went, and Tehandar Mutwane still stayed on in the little Scotch watering-place, although it was palpable to all that he had not come there for the baths, or even for the waters, for a course of which even the strongest usually went in. He was generally to be seen with Avice and Mrs Douglas—often even with Avice

alone—and besides them, he seemed to have few or no acquaintances in the place. It was pity for his loneliness, partly, and partly also a desire to please her father, which had led Avice, and through her, Mrs Douglas, to adopt the foreigner into their set; and having once been adopted, he had no mind to be dropped again; and thus it came to pass that in all their rambles and excursions he generally made one. He exercised a curious subtle power over Avice herself from the first; and by degrees, it had grown stronger as he became more intimate with her, until at length the girl, frightened at first by the strange unaccustomed feeling, had unconsciously ceased to struggle against it, and indeed seemed almost to court its power.

Two or three days of damp uncertain weather were succeeded by one of such extraordinary splendour that Mrs Douglas declared they ought to celebrate its appearance by some grand expedition; and after much debating and careful weighing of all the pros and cons, it was unanimously decided that they should make up a party and visit a curious old mansion in the next village, which was said to have formed one of Prince Charlie's halting-places during the '45.

The party was quite a small one, consisting only of Mrs Douglas and her friend Mrs Digby Browne; the latter's daughter; a certain Oliver Westall, with whom they had become acquainted through Mrs Barfelt; Tehandar Mutwane and Avice; and they set off gaily soon after breakfast, determining to lunch at the inn of Inchbothie, returning home for dinner.

Miss Digby Browne, having a decided horror of foreigners in general and Tehandar in particular, established herself under Mr Westall's protecting wing; and as the two elder ladies were deep in the criticism of a mutual friend, it fell out that Tehandar and Avice were left to each other, a state of things which gave the former at any rate deep satisfaction.

'You must explain it all to me,' he said with a smile, as Avice made some remark about the historical interest of the place; 'for I am afraid that I am very ignorant in the matter.'

And though Avice modestly professed herself to be about as ignorant as he was, he refused to be guided about the house by any one but her. It was an old house, built in a variety of styles, and, when the owners were away, quite the show-place of the country-side, full of old ancestral portraits and curious heirlooms, many of them rendered sacred by the touch of royal fingers, or consecrated from time immemorial to none but royal use. There was even a legend that once, during one of his periods of exile, Robert the Bruce had sought the shelter of its friendly walls, and the room was still shown where he passed the night.

'We must go and see that!' cried Avice enthusiastically, as they all stood together in the old oak-panelled hall debating where to go first. 'Come, Mr Mutwane, you and I will set off and lead the way. The guide-book says it is at the back of the house on the second floor.' And followed by the willing Tehandar, she disappeared through the door.

Oliver Westall gazed after her with a look of grave disapproval, not unmingled with anxiety.

'She is such a charming girl,' he muttered to himself: 'surely she can't be intending to marry that fellow; and yet she certainly does encourage him decidedly.'

The latter part of this statement seemed true enough; for all that day Tehandar never left her side, and she appeared anything but bored by his attentions. It was growing late, and Mrs Douglas was beginning to think of turning home, when suddenly, as he and Avice leant over one of the battlemented turrets, revelling in the beauty of the scene below, Mutwanee began softly: 'We have known each other quite a long time now, Miss Sacharty.'

'More than a week!' returned Avice, laughing.

'More than a week!' he echoed, turning his dark eyes full upon her—'to me it seems a lifetime—a life-time of happiness. Oh Avice, my pearl, my jewel, say you will turn the friendship of these days into the love of eternity! Avice Sacharty, I ask you to be my wife!'

A cold shiver passed through the girl's frame; it was scarcely due to the September air. 'No, no!' she cried feebly, raising her hands, as if to shut out the power of his gaze. 'No; I cannot, I cannot!'

'Cannot!' he said softly, but with a persuasive accent in his mellow voice, drawing down her hands as he spoke with a gentle but firm persistence against which she was powerless. 'Nay; think again; cannot? Why "cannot?" Let it rather be "can" and "will!" And as he spoke he bent his gaze upon her with renewed intensity. 'Say yes! sweet one. See, it will be easy!' In spite of the term of endearment and the coaxing tone, the words seemed more like a command than an entreaty.

Again that nervous shiver passed over her, and she was silent. Was it a battle with a stronger will which kept her dumb? Who can say?

Tehandar paused, as if waiting for an answer. 'I am rich, rich,' he whispered. 'In my own country I am a prince—a rajah; but if I have not you I am poor. But you will say yes—yes, I feel it!'

The strong will triumphed. Avice bowed her head. 'It shall be, then, as you wish,' she returned wearily. 'Yes; I will marry you some day—some day,' she repeated, as if to reassure herself. 'But now, let us go; the rest are waiting.' She turned away, a strange bewildered feeling in her heart; and Tehandar followed her, a triumphant light in his dark eyes.

'Your congratulations, Mrs Douglas,' he said suavely as they parted in the hotel hall. 'Miss Avice has consented to be my wife.'

Mrs Douglas looked amazed. Somehow, it had never entered her head that Avice would marry Tehandar Mutwanee—the thing was absurd on the face of it; and she determined to take her young friend severely to task when they got up-stairs, dim visions of Miss Marchmont's wrath disturbing her peace of mind; but the hall was too public a place for a 'scene,' so she smiled her congratulations politely.

One person, however, looked gravely displeased as he noted the Malay's look of triumph, and Avice's evident shrinking from notice, and that person was Oliver Westall. A student of nature from his earliest years, he had been strangely attracted by Avice from the first night of her

arrival; and if hitherto we have said nothing about him, it is because he had always been content to stand aside and watch with critical eye the different phases of human life which are so plentiful in a little place like Strath Carron.

Avice had always greeted him kindly with the bright sweet smile which seemed like a ray of warm June sunlight let loose on the world, and for that reason, more than any other, Oliver Westall took a deeper interest than ordinary in the girl's welfare.

'What a pity!' he murmured, shaking his head sadly as he retired to his own room to dress. 'She was such a sweet girl; and he— Well, I don't know what her parents can be thinking about!' And later on, as he wrote to his particular chum, Jack D'Arcy, he told him the little episode, with a few cynical observations of his own on the vanity of all human things, intended for his friend's benefit and his own comfort.

In the meanwhile, Mrs Douglas, conscious, perhaps, of having somewhat neglected her duty to Avice, was satisfying the qualms of her own conscience by reproving the girl severely for her 'rash and foolish engagement,' in a manner not calculated to soothe or calm her decidedly agitated spirit.

Did Miss Marchmont know anything of the affair? she inquired at length, having exhausted all her other arguments—or her father?

Avice was obliged reluctantly to admit that neither of them knew anything of the matter. Her father was comparatively a stranger to her; and as for Miss Marchmont—well, for some inexplicable reason, she declared that she had not been able to write about Tehandar Mutwanee to her aunt, except once, and then no notice whatever had been taken of her announcement. 'Even though I said he was a friend of papa's!' she added, as if to remind Mrs Douglas that this was the case.

But Mrs Douglas refused to be reminded, and began attacking the first part of her assertion. 'Why couldn't you write to your aunt about him?' she asked in some astonishment not unminged with incredulity. 'It is so silly to talk like that, as if any one were preventing you!'

'That's just what I felt!' began the girl eagerly. 'My tongue—I mean my pen—— Oh!' she exclaimed, 'I simply couldn't write it—that was just what I felt.'

Mrs Douglas began to grow slightly alarmed. Was it possible that the excitement of it all was affecting the girl's brain? Was this man exerting some strange occult power to fascinate the girl, and lure her into his toils? The idea was absurd; but still, Avice herself was half an Eastern by blood, and Eastern people were very excitable. And her suspicions being confirmed in a degree by the girl's flushed cheeks and unnaturally bright eyes, she promptly sent her to bed, saying as she did so, 'I shall write to your aunt myself to-morrow, and then we shall see.'

But the morrow unexpectedly brought Mr Sacharty to the hotel to see his daughter; and in the private tête-à-tête which Mrs Douglas had with him, he soon convinced her that the match had his entire approbation, and declared that he himself would acquaint Miss Marchmont with all particulars.

To tell the truth, the easy-going matron was not sorry to relinquish the task to him, for she stood in considerable awe of the grave spinster, who was more her husband's friend than her own, and did not care to risk an explosion of her ire. To his daughter herself Kilnurf was kinder than he had ever been, and joined his entreaties with those of Tehandar for a speedy wedding. 'It would be so nice, you know, if you could go out with him when he goes back,' he said one day as he and Avice returned from a ramble among the hills. 'He has such a lonely life, poor fellow, and in spite of his wealth is often very miserable, for lack of a woman's help and comfort.'

And Tehandar himself murmured the same in her ear as they sat together under the shade of the pine-trees, or wandered up and down the heathery braes drinking deep draughts of the pure strong mountain air; and his words, so often repeated, yet always with some tender variation, seemed, for all their pleading, like commands that could not be disobeyed, until at last Avice, in spite of herself, was obliged to consent, and promise to marry him soon—yes, very soon; when she did not say, but it should be soon.

She was looking dreadfully ill and worn, poor girl; so much so, that others besides Oliver Westall were beginning to notice it, and to say to each other doubtfully that being engaged did not seem to agree with Miss Sacharty. The fact was that she was perfectly sure in her heart of hearts that she hated Tehandar Mutwane, hated him with all her soul; and yet she could not, do what she would, shake herself free from the fascination which he exercised over her. She longed intensely to be able to snatch off her betrothal ring, a costly one of curious workmanship, and throw it in his face, retracting at the same time her promise to be his wife—and still she dared not. The power of his superior will seemed entirely to have dominated hers; and with the calm gaze of those unflinching eyes upon her, she felt that had he commanded her to hang herself she could not have disobeyed. 'If Aunt Amelia were only here!' she moaned as she tossed restlessly from side to side in the dark night hours—'or Mr Standish!'

But she would not have been able to tell them anything if they had been, for she had tried many a time to write a statement of the case to her aunt; and every time, as she told Mrs Douglas, an indefinable something seemed to stay her hand, and she could not write it.

It was with considerable surprise one morning that she received a letter from Miss Marchmont, enclosed in one to her father, in which she urged her niece to consent to a scheme which Tehandar had proposed a few days before—that they should be married that very week by special license in the Episcopal church close by.

'It would be so nice,' her aunt wrote, 'for them to spend their honeymoon together in London; and although she herself, on account of the infection, could not be present at the ceremony, she would join them in town, and they would have a few delightful weeks together before they went to India.'

Avice could hardly believe her eyes as she read this unexpected letter. Opposition on her aunt's part had been the one straw to which she had

clung, and now even this had failed her! Well, since things were so, there seemed nothing for it but to submit to fate, or rather to the irresistible will of Tehandar Mutwane.

'That girl I told you of in my last is going to be married, it seems, on Saturday,' wrote the cynical Westall to his friend the next day; 'and this is Tuesday! There seems something a little uncanny to my mind in such very quick work. Poor little Miss Sacharty—did I tell you that was her name?—she does not seem to thrive on her wooing. Let us hope matrimony may have a more salubrious effect!'

FROM THE MINT.

EVERY year a somewhat secluded Government Department, situated east of Tower Hill, officially reminds the world of its existence and of its activity. It presents to both Houses of Parliament, by command of Her Majesty, and offers to any one not within those august precincts, for a merely nominal sum, an interesting and detailed account of its doings for the past twelve months. And certainly the twenty-first Annual Report of the Deputy-Master of the Mint, just issued, in no way falls behind its predecessors in offering a striking array of facts and figures.

The first hasty glance reveals that in 1890 the good round sum of £9,460,860, 8s. 4d. has been issued to fill the purses of Her Majesty's most liege subjects. This sum comprised coins of all denominations except those little-known and perhaps less needed five-pound and two-pound pieces, which appear to have been cut off as cumberers of the ground since Jubilee year. Over six and a half million of the cosmopolitan sovereign, always and everywhere worth its weight in standard gold, were coined; beside two and a quarter million half-sovereigns, the coinage of which had been practically suspended since 1885; about a million bloated aldermanic crown pieces; and three-quarters of a million of those coins whose heraldic device was so irreverently stigmatised by the *Daily Telegraph* as consisting of a couple of kitchen pokers and a tea-tray. For shillings and sixpences there was apparently a considerable demand, no fewer than 8,794,042 of the one and 9,386,955 of the other having been struck. Florins, which some people think could be dispensed with altogether, reached the comparatively small total of only 1,684,737 pieces, which is only just about half that of the half-crowns. Threepenny bits, the 'Jenny Wrens' of our coinage, swarmed to the extent of 4,470,322 pieces. While it may be information to some that silver coins smaller even than this 'wee bit o' siller' were issued from the Mint. Diminutive twopenny bits and dainty pennies (sixty-six weighing one ounce troy), with a certain prescribed number of threepences and fourpences, are distributed every Maundy-Thursday in the Chapel Royal to needy pensioners by the Queen's Almoner, and are consequently known as Royal Maundy Money. These Moneys constitute a privileged class, and seldom,

if ever, suffer the degradation of their plebeian kindred in being bartered over the counter for fat bacon or red herrings. Though sometimes shamefully prostituted to adorn the neckcloths and watchchains of a certain class of society, they are more generally acquired by enthusiastic numismatists, and allowed an unbroken and indulgent repose on the velvet cushions of their coin cabinets.

Bronze coins are in a large proportion, being nearly four-ninths of the total number of pieces (gold, silver, and bronze) coined. There is the inconceivable number of 28,718,145 pence, halfpence, and farthings bearing the date of 1890, representing a nominal value of £89,546, 15s. 5d., and a total weight of over two hundred and eleven tons. This annual coinage of bronze moneys, we are told, is unprecedented in extent since 1861-63, when coins of this description were first issued. The Deputy-Master enlivens his Report by stating that near Christmas last the demand for 'coppers'—as most people still designate those coins that have ceased to be 'copper' these thirty years—was so great that gold and silver were set aside, and the whole Mint strength concentrated upon the out-turn of pence, halfpence, and farthings. The Comptroller of the Mint adds, with quiet satisfaction, as a proof of the remarkable efficiency of his department, that in the fortnight ended 24th December 1890, no less than £20,725 of bronze coins, numbering 6,170,400 pieces, and weighing over forty-eight tons, were supplied to the London district and the provinces.

Reference is made to the abnormal issue of no less than £3,873,576 of silver coin in the two years 1889 and 1890. Its extraordinary nature is easily seen by comparison with the total issue of the previous ten years, 1879-88, which was only £7,298,240, or less than double the value in five times as long a time. These large demands are attributed to three causes: (1) The revival of trade in the United Kingdom; (2) the payment of wages in dockyards and other large Government establishments in silver instead of half-sovereigns; and (3), the arrangement by which the Mint, from the 31st of May 1889, undertook to pay the cost of the carriage of silver coin from the Bank of England to its branches and to provincial applicants.

The figures of the coinages for only the last twenty years are colossal and beyond adequate conception. The total value issued in 1871-91 was £76,051,059, weighing 4589 tons. The pieces numbered 722,503,202, thus representing an average out-turn of two hundred and forty per minute, without taking into consideration various stoppages for repairs and other reasons. Counting one hundred a minute for twelve hours every day, more than twenty-seven and a half years would elapse before the total number of coins would be reached. The value of the gold coined was £58,172,407; of the silver, £16,912,839; and of the bronze, £965,813. The coins included

were 53,200 five-pound pieces; 85,293 two-pound pieces; 43,035,103 sovereigns; 29,501,436 half-sovereigns; 3,188,592 crowns; 2,689,830 double florins; 29,244,248 half-crowns (the coinage of which, suspended from 1851, was only resumed in 1874); 44,049,060 florins; 93,574,800 shillings; 83,025,360 sixpences; 60,646,080 threepences; 456,600 Maundy Moneys; 160,204,800 pennies; 113,612,800 halfpennies; and 59,136,000 farthings. It will be seen that coins of small denominations abound most largely, for the simple reason that more are required to make up equal amounts. The demand for bronze has always been large and continuous. Since the introduction of the bronze currency in 1860, 4790 tons of pence, halfpence, and farthings, numbering 702,250,080 pieces, and of a nominal value of £2,008,623, have been supplied. And only about one-sixteenth of this amount was exported to the colonies, the remainder being distributed in the United Kingdom.

In a Report from the Mint, one would naturally expect to find some information as to the question of the recoinage of British light gold. For it has long been generally recognised that a large proportion of sovereigns, and a still larger of half-sovereigns, are below the legal current weight. Successive Chancellors of the Exchequer, who are also Masters of the Mint in conjunction with that office, have either evaded the difficult problem altogether, or suggested some such unpopular solution as clipping the half-sovereign to pay for the sovereign. The present Government, however, have made a special inquiry into the condition of the gold currency. In the early part of 1888, all gold coins taken at three hundred of the principal post-offices in Great Britain and Ireland on a specified day were forwarded to the Mint, where they were carefully examined as to age and weight. The result, together with other investigations on the same subject, was included in the Mint Report for 1889. Therein the Deputy-Master estimates that out of a total gold circulation in this country of £102,500,000, the total value of the light coins is £52,625,000, or more than fifty per cent. This shows a deficiency of £804,390, which, however, is not surprising, when it is remembered that the life of a sovereign is estimated to be but nineteen years, and that of a half-sovereign only nine; and at the same time there has been no general withdrawal of light gold for forty-five years. At any rate this experiment afforded abundant proof that prompt measures were necessary. Accordingly, the Coinage Act provided that all pre-Victorian gold should be exchanged by the Mint for its nominal value; and on the 22d of November 1890 a Royal Proclamation announced that all gold coin of former reigns would cease to be legal tender in the United Kingdom after the 28th of February 1891. The total amount withdrawn by these means was £2,468,148; and the total value of the deficiency on these coins in weight and fineness proved to be £51,299, 14s. 3d.; or a mean total cost to the Exchequer of 4·998 pence per pound sterling. At this rate the £400,000 which Mr Goschen proposed on Budget night to devote

to this purpose would cover the loss on withdrawing nineteen millions of the £52,625,000 of light gold which Sir Charles Fremantle estimates to be somewhere in the country.

THE QUEEN'S PARDON.

A DACOIT STORY.

WHEN, at the end of the year 188-, I was sent to take up the duties of Assistant-Superintendent of Police at Pyeemana, in the Hanthawaddy Division of Lower Burma, I was told before I left Rangoon that I should find there no lack of opportunity to distinguish myself; and I soon discovered how truly this hint reflected the condition of the district. The country was literally overrun with dacoits, who found it a peculiarly favourable field for their malpractices. The villages were small, far apart, and, comparatively speaking, well-to-do; roads were practically *nil*; and boundless tracts of jungle and teak-forest afforded secure shelter for the light-heeled gang-robbers who haunted them. The police garrisons were few, and consisted entirely of Burman constables, whom their lawless compatriots utterly despised.

Of the numerous gangs which lived upon the peaceable inhabitants, the largest and most mischievous was one led by a man named 'Boh Hlan.' This outlaw was a species of Burman Robin Hood, and he owed his long immunity from capture to his cheap generosity. He was the terror of wealthy cultivators whose houses were worth looting, and the unflinching friend and patron of the poorer classes. What he stole with one hand, he lavished broadcast with the other; hence information which might have enabled the police to arrest him was particularly difficult to obtain.

To compass the death or capture of this man was the chief end of my professional life during the first months of my stay at Pyeemana. For weeks together I hunted his gang from cover to cover and from village to village. Such jungle-work during the hot season is not conducive to health of either white man or native. By the time the 'rains' were due, my constables were completely worn out by the hardships of their life, while I myself was almost incapacitated by repeated attacks of fever, brought on by sleeping out in marshy jungle and living on the poorest diet. At intervals I took my men back to Pyeemana, to let them rest and recruit; but these much-needed holidays from dacoit-hunting never lasted very long. Sometimes an alarm from a remote corner of the district drew us out on a wildgoose chase; or impatient despatches from headquarters asking what was being done, and how I explained the continued paralysis of trade in my locality; or private letters from my superiors, urging me to renewed efforts, drove me out into the forests again with followers scarcely fit to carry their own rifles.

I was thoroughly sick of the whole business, and would have done anything to get rid of the perpetual worry, when I was surprised by a visit from the officer in charge of the Police Department. He had come to Pyeemana to 'inspect,' for which ordeal I was quite prepared;

but besides inspection, he came to give me new and unexpected instructions regarding the attitude I was to assume towards the dacoits.

'The Government,' he said, 'has determined to try what effect an offer of Pardon will produce on these fellows. Do you think any of those who are harrying your district would come in if promised free pardon for past offences?'

I considered the question carefully. Although we had failed to bring down or arrest any of the outlaws, we had kept them so remorselessly on the move that they had had no time to do mischief for the last two months. No man grows tired of his business sooner than an idle dacoit, and Boh Hlan had made no raids worth anything lately. I therefore answered in the affirmative. I believed many would 'come in' if they could be convinced they might do so without fear of the consequences.

'Very good,' said my chief. 'You are empowered to treat with the dacoits in your district on these terms: full pardon to every man who has not a price upon his head who comes in and gives up his arms before the 31st July next. See what you can do.'

He went away next day, leaving me to my own devices. I cannot say I relished the idea of carrying out these instructions. I was obliged to confess to myself that with the means at my command I could make little headway against the storm of crime; but to offer free pardon looked too much like admission of disability to be palatable to me. However, the order had been given, and I resolved to turn the chance it offered to the best account.

I lost no time. I determined to begin with Boh Hlan, who chanced, quite undeservedly, not to be one of those for whose head a reward had been proclaimed. He was the greatest pest I had to deal with, and, moreover, he had his band so well in hand, that if he consented to apply for pardon I felt certain his entire following would do the same. So, an hour after Colonel X. had gone, I sent an orderly to summon the old *phoongyee* (priest) who was the sole occupant of the tiny monastery outside Pyeemana. The person of a *phoongyee* is peculiarly sacred even to dacoits; and I subjected the old man to no risk in appointing him my ambassador to Boh Hlan.

The *phoongyee* soon appeared, and entered the veranda of my house at the slow stately pace observed by the Buddhist priesthood. He had been a tall man; but now he was bent with age; and the yellow robe which had fallen from his shoulder discovered a frame as gaunt and shrivelled as that of a mummy. With his shaven head, sunken eyes and cheeks, and dry parchment-like skin, he looked a messenger more fitting to carry tidings of Death than of Peace.

Infirm though he appeared, he was still active both in body and mind; and when I had explained what I wanted with him, he readily consented to 'help the Government side.' Could he ascertain Boh Hlan's present hiding-place, and make his way thither? The old man bowed; he had no doubt he could—if he went alone. Then would he attempt it, and deliver with his own lips the message I wished given the dacoit chief? He would, certainly, if I would write the message down.

I did what he required, and begged him to go soon; and having received the old man's assurance that he would start at once, I dismissed him, praying that success might attend his mission.

How or where he found the Boh, I did not think proper to inquire; but five days afterwards, he reappeared, looking if possible a shade more withered than before.

'The Boh,' he began without any preliminaries, and in the matter-of-fact tones he might have used in delivering a casual message from a next-door neighbour—'the Boh is willing to treat with your honour, and names a place of meeting.'

'Very good!' I exclaimed. 'You have indeed done well!'

The old phoongyee smiled at me pityingly. 'Boh Hlan's words were these,' he continued: 'Tell the police officer to come and meet us at Thongway village a week hence. He must come alone and without arms. If he carries any weapon, we shall know his fine words are lies.'

I could not repress a gasp of astonishment and dismay. The phoongyee fairly burst out laughing.

'Of course your honour will not go?' he observed.

'Yes; I shall,' I replied, though my heart was beating like a hammer at the prospect of such an encounter.

'The old man may counsel the young,' said the phoongyee respectfully. 'If your honour go to Thongway, he goes to his death.'

An opinion given by this man was well worth consideration; but continued failures and official 'wiggings' had made me reckless; and I was not in a mood to listen to reason. Here at last was a chance of doing something tangible; it was literally 'neck or nothing!' but I had no idea of missing it. I therefore warmly thanked the old phoongyee for his services and his kind advice; but reminded him that if I declined to meet the Boh even on such preposterous conditions, it would produce a very serious effect on the state of the country. Would he oblige me by seeking out the dacoit leader again, and telling him I would meet him at Thongway on the day named?—My adviser flatly refused; he would help no man to his death.

'Did Boh Hlan say he would be there on Thursday?' I inquired.

'Your honour, he did; but'—

I cut the old gentleman short, and told him he had permission to go home to his monastery. This was Monday, and I had no time to waste in fruitless argument.

I did not grow more enamoured of the plan as I thought over it. Boh Hlan was a thorough scoundrel. I could not forget that I had, in our only skirmish, with my own gun wounded him in the arm; and he was not likely to have forgotten it either. But I was determined to meet him. If he consented to 'come in,' I should score a good mark at headquarters; if he played me false—

Thongway was a small hamlet of notoriously bad repute, lying under the Shan Hills, about fifty miles away. If the dacoits agreed to lay down their arms and give up their business in return for pardon, it would be no easy matter to persuade them to come in as prisoners and

go through the form of trial, as the authorities required: they would never consent to follow me back tamely on such terms. I therefore resolved to take the whole police force I had at command, encamp at a spot I knew of, about ten miles from Thongway, and bring them in under guard; always supposing they meant fair play. I did not care to ponder over the alternative.

I pass over the two days' march to the place I had selected for my police encampment. We arrived there late in the evening, very thoroughly done up by our wearisome tramp in the heat of the sun, and all hands turned in early. The following day was that fixed for the meeting at Thongway, and tired as I was, idle speculations on the task to-morrow had in store kept me awake all night. I was up at daylight, making my last preparations, and giving my sergeant orders to be carried out in event of my non-return; but I did not set out for the rendezvous until the sun was high. The residents of Thongway were to a man friends of Boh Hlan; and if I appeared first on the ground, they were not likely to lose such an opportunity of taking my head as an acceptable gift for their patron. They might have learned from the Boh that their village had been chosen as a meeting-place; but more likely not; and I preferred to run no unnecessary risks.

Giving my sergeant the only orders I could depend upon his carrying out—namely, to return with all haste to Pyemana if I failed to appear before midnight, I took my stick, filled my pockets with biscuit, and started for my destination. The country through which the path to Thongway led was very lovely; open and grassy, splendidly timbered, and wonderfully rich in orchids, whose blossoms gleamed, pink, yellow, red, and white, from almost every bough; while the darkly-wooded hills rose to a height of five thousand feet right before me. I remember the scenery now, though I did not pay much attention to it at the time. I don't think I am more of a coward than most men, but I do not mind confessing that I walked that ten miles to Thongway in a condition of unspeakable 'funk.'

I reached the belt of jungle which surrounded the village at a little distance, about eleven o'clock; and when I emerged on the open paddy-land which lay between me and the cluster of bamboo huts, I paused to pull myself together and try to discover whether the dacoits were true to their tryst. I could see no one in the village save a few romping children; but on moving a little farther to the left, I saw a crowd of men squatting in the shade of a clump of elephant bamboos, a little way on the far side of the hamlet. So far so good. I wiped the perspiration from my face and hands and strode forward. My heart sank a little lower as I drew near, for I saw that every man of the assembly was armed. That did not look as though they intended peace.

The screams of the children, frightened by such a strange monster as a white man, spared me the trouble of announcing my arrival to the dacoits. They rose with one accord and, making very unnecessary display of their *dahs* and spears, began to slouch towards me in twos and threes. I took my stand under a huge tree, and threw up my hands to show I was unarmed, according to agreement. Then, actuated by somewhat mixed motives,

I shouted in commanding tones to the advancing dacoits: 'Lay down your arms! I will not speak with any man who approaches me with *dah*, spear, or gun in his hand!'

The effect of my speech was far from satisfactory; every man stopped, paused for a moment, and then slunk back to the shade, where all sat down again. I did not like this. It denoted that the dacoits were in no good-humour, and I wished myself well out of the place. But having forbidden them to come near me armed, it would never do to retract, and I sat down on the ground to consider my next move. It was not left to me to make one. After twenty minutes of hot discussion the dacoits appeared to have formed some plan of their own. Four men very deliberately set up bamboo tripods and squatted down to rest their guns on them, in accordance with the Burman's practice when he means to take a good aim; then one man, carrying an antiquated carbine, was pushed and scolded out of the group, evidently charged with a message to me. He came very slowly, and I could see he was in a terrible fright; but I was growing painfully anxious to open negotiations, and rose to receive him, holding out my hands and trying hard not to look at those four levelled guns.

'Come here,' I said persuasively; 'I have no arms.'

The man grinned the sickliest grin I have ever seen on human countenance, and stammered out something relative to my *thaynatgalay* (pistol; literally, small gun). As well as I could make out, his friends had sent him to ascertain that I had not a revolver concealed about me. They did not believe I would come without it, and would like to be quite sure.

This was more reassuring. I held up my hands again, and begged the trembling messenger to come and satisfy himself.

'Come!' I said as persuasively as I could—'come, and look all over me.—Look! I take off my coat, that you may see I have no pistol.' I threw my *karki* jacket on the ground and held up my hands again. The fellow took heart of grace and came nearer.

'Turn round,' he requested. 'They will shoot you dead if you kill me.'

'I can't kill you,' I replied shortly, as I turned slowly round for convenience of inspection. 'I didn't come here alone to kill any one; I came to talk to Boh Hlan about this matter of pardon.'

The man grunted an assent; and having ascertained that the bulky contents of my coat-pockets were nothing more dangerous than biscuit and cheroots, bawled to his companions to 'Come!' Those gentry then laid down their weapons and obeyed, laughing and talking with insolent defiance.

Five minutes more, and I found myself the centre of a tightly-packed crowd of squatting figures, who stared at me as though eyes could kill. I did not feel easy by any means, hemmed in on all sides by ruffians to whom murder was child's play, and whose lives I had been diligently seeking for the past five months. No attempt to hustle me was made; but the expression on every one of the lowering savage faces told how light a word, how slight a slip of the tongue, was necessary to set them at my throat. Now and again I caught some half-jeering obser-

vation as to my helpless condition there in their midst; and I was half tempted to hurl some scathing challenge to them which would ensure my death at once, and leave them an inheritance of bullet or rope. All were talking at once, to me and at me, and my patience was sorely tried before a momentary lull gave me a chance of making myself heard. It came at last after the very worst quarter of an hour I ever spent, and I made my speech. In brief, I explained the terms on which pardon would be granted; insisted strongly on the increase of the Punjaabee Military Police, then in process of organisation; reverted again to the pardon now offered, and exhorted them to take advantage of an opportunity that might not occur again.

'Now, Boh Hlan,' I concluded, addressing the leader, who was squatting almost on my feet, 'what do you say?'

The man ran his finger nervously over the unsightly lumps on his chest which marked the spots where charms had been let in below the skin, and said 'he would like to talk it over.'

'It is good,' I replied, breathing more freely. 'I am here to talk with you.'

'I have here,' said the chief, raising his arm and showing a puckered white scar, 'a wound from your gun. Moung Tsit has a wound on his leg; many of us have received hurts from the police.'

The Boh's reference to wounds was followed by a slight commotion; half-a-dozen men stood up to show newly-healed bullet-wounds, and some, hideous suppurating sores which made me sick to look upon.

'The police guns have made these wounds,' said Boh Hlan, looking at me fixedly.

My rising hopes sank to zero again. An ominous silence reigned over the gang for a couple of minutes, and I did not care to break it.

'The police guns made these wounds,' repeated the Boh as stolidly as before.

The man was evidently playing with me, or trying to work upon the vengeful feelings of his men. If I gave their resentiment time to hatch, my life was not worth an hour's purchase. I felt that my voice trembled when I spoke.

'Those men who have been wounded,' I said, 'will be taken into the Government Hospital and cured. Or if they prefer it, they shall have as much English medicine as they please.'

I was unutterably relieved to see the general approval these remarks evoked. The dacoits' brows cleared, and in my heart I gave thanks for the Burman's unshakable faith in the efficacy of 'English medicine.'

I followed up my advantage by lighting a cheroot, and after taking a pull or two at it, I passed it to the Boh; he hesitated a moment, for smoking one cheroot, turn about, is only practised among friends and neighbours; but finally he accepted it, drew a full mouthful of smoke, and handed the tobacco to the man next him.

A better understanding being now established, the dacoits became anxious to hear more about the intentions of the Government. Over and over again I had to reiterate that not a man who gave himself up should have a single hair upon his head cut off; that they would be brought before the judge and pardoned without delay; and that they should have nothing whatever to fear from the police after their release; they

might live wherever they pleased and do what they liked.

After two hours' hard assertion and promise, I drew out my note-book and asked Boh Hlan point-blank if I should write down his name as an applicant for pardon. He hung back a little, but at length gave way; and soon I was taking down names as fast as I could write. I was delighted with the success of my foolhardy errand; but I was not yet out of the wood.

'Now,' I said, closing my book, 'there are still some men who have not asked to come in. I will come back to-morrow and give them one more chance.'

'Where are you going?' demanded the Boh curtly.

'To my camp, ten miles from here,' I answered.

'Are the police there?'

'Certainly.'

A loud murmuring arose from the crowd, and the Boh made no attempt to quell it. Clearly the information that the police were so close at hand disturbed them.

'See!' I shouted at the top of my voice, 'what would it matter though the police were here in this village? They will not hurt you now.'

But the alarm was not to be so easily allayed.

'You must stay here to-night,' said Boh Hlan firmly, turning to me.

'If I do not return,' I answered, 'my men will think I am killed, and will go quickly to Pyeemana. The Deputy-Commissioner will then send five hundred men out after you.'

The Boh laughed. 'For how many months have you been trying to catch me?' he jeered. 'But you shall not go. How can I tell but that you will return at once with your police to-night, they being so near at hand? Now you know where we may be found, you will again try to shoot us.'

There was no arguing with such obstinate distrust as this; but the position was exceedingly awkward. I could not go without the dacoits' sanction, and to remain would inevitably bring out an expedition to avenge my imaginary murder. All I had half-done would be undone, and more besides, before matters could be explained.

'I will stay,' I answered, recognising the necessity; 'but you must send two of your men to my camp with the letter I shall write, and those two men must remain with the police as hostages.'

I was agreeably surprised by the Boh's ready consent to this arrangement; and without delay I sat down and pencilled a note to my sergeant, explaining my delay and bidding him detain the messengers.

I did not sleep much that night. I occupied a hut with the dacoit chief and a dozen of his men, who were as wakeful as I was. The outlaws talked all night about my visit to them, and the probability of the Government keeping its promise of pardon. They seemed unable to believe that it was not a ruse to make prisoners of them, and several predicted that their fate would be death or—even worse to the Burmese mind—exile to the Andaman Islands. Some boldly voted that I should be killed as I lay (supposed) asleep, and that an attack should be made on my police camp. This suggestion found several supporters, and for an eternity I lay listening while my fate was shuttlecocked to and fro. In vain I listened for

Boh Hlan's voice; either he was asleep, or held aloof from the debate, for he did not speak a word until, in the advanced hours of the morning, a hot dispute began between some of his band regarding their conduct on the following day. Then he delivered his own decision, straightforwardly enough.

'Silence, you!' he cried. 'Listen! This English police officer is alone, and he cannot take any man against his will. Those who like may run away. I believe the Englishman has spoken truth, and I shall follow him to Pyeemana. Those who will may follow me.'

Not another word was said; and worn out with anxiety and fatigue, I fell asleep.

I was up at dawn, eager to start back to camp before the dacoit chief should change his mind. I found that five of those who had promised submission had thought better of it, and had bolted; but Boh Hlan and twenty-seven of his men professed themselves ready to accompany me. I was a proud man when I marched into my camp at the head of this file of dacoits.

I need not linger over the sequel. The gang gave up their arms and assumed the rôle of prisoners with a good deal of murmuring; and their reproaches did not decrease when they were committed to the lock-up to await their formal trial. That ordeal took place almost immediately, and they were set free on promising to be of good behaviour for the future.

The impression this treatment made upon them was evidenced in a remarkable manner. Within a month of their dismissal, pardoned, no fewer than eighty-seven dacoits came in voluntarily and gave up their arms. Thus my trip to Thongway bore fruit more valuable than I in my most sanguine moments ever dared anticipate; but I should not care to go through the experience again.

J U L Y.

LIKE a fairy enwreathed with the blossoms

That sprang from the footsteps of June—

Like a queen from the realms of the rainbow

Engirdled with rays from the moon—

July comes when the sounds are entrancing

That are borne on the breast of the breeze,

Her glances the hills are enhancing

That smile on the seas.

Beams in beauty the dell and the dingle,

The upland, the garden, the lawn;

Pink flowerets peep up from the shingle,

When wavelets sing welcome to dawn;

And the rocks that for ever look leeward,

Like sentinels guarding the land,

Rejoice when the sun from the seaward

Engoldens the strand.

Her evenings are moonlit and starry,

The hills are in purple of kings,

Tall trees like true knights seem to tarry

Till July her royalty brings.

'Mid the scenes of her wealth let us linger,

And list to the harp that is strung,

Which when July hath touched with her finger,

The aged grow young.

ROBERT S. MUTCH.

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